THE ADVENT

Vol. XVI. No. 2 April, 1959

A Quarterly Devoted to the Exposition of Sri Aurobindo's Vision of the Future

Subscription : Inland, Rupees Five; Foreign, Twelve Shillings Six Pence
Inland : Single Copy, Rupee One and Naye Paise Fifty

PUBLICATION OFFICE :— SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM, PONDICHERRY

The Advent

INDIAN SILK HOUSE
COLLEGE STREET, MARKET
CALCUTTA-12

Beauty is as much
An Expression
of
The Divine
As Knowledge, Power or Ananda.

SRI AUROBINDO

INDIAN SILK HOUSE
COLLEGE STREET, MARKET
CALCUTTA-12

The Advent

Leave all care to the Divine's Grace, including your progress, and you will be in peace.

5-5-1958 THE MOTHER

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/advent_1959-04_16_2

The ADVENT

APRIL, 1959

CONTENTS

		Page
EDITORIALS: THE MOTHER'S COMMENTARY ON SRI AUROBINDO'S *Thoughts and Aphorisms*	—*Nolini Kanta Gupta*	... 5
A GREAT GOD HAS BEEN RELEASED	—*Sri Aurobindo*	... 13
SRI AUROBINDO LITERATURE (II)	—*M. P. Pandit*	... 19
THE TEACHINGS OF THE MOTHER (XIII)	—*Rishabhchand*	... 24
THE LIFE DIVINE (An Outline)	—*N. Pearson*	... 35
REVIEWS :		
SRI AUROBINDO'S POLITICAL THOUGHT	—*S. K. Mitra*	... 44
EIGHTEEN UPANISHADS	—*M. P. Pandit*	... 53

A supermind free, master, expressive of divine glories will be the superman's central instrument. Its untrammelled movement of self-existent knowledge, spontaneous power and untainted delight will impress the harmony of the life of the gods on the earthly existence.

SRI AUROBINDO

Vol. XVI. No. 2 April, 1959

THE ADVENT

The Divine gives itself to those who give themselves without reserve and in all their parts to the Divine. For them the calm, the light, the power, the bliss, the freedom, the wideness, the heights of knowledge, the seas of Ananda. - - - - - *Sri Aurobindo.*

EDITORIALS*

The Mother's Commentary on Sri Aurobindo's *Thoughts aud Aphorisms*

I

"There are two allied powers in man : Knowledge and Wisdom. Knowledge is so much of the truth, seen in a distorted medium, as the mind arrives at by groping; Wisdom what the eye of Divine vision sees in the spirit."

IT has been asked, "Why are the powers allied ?"

I suppose it is habitual to see in man all kinds of things quarrelling so much so that it evokes wonder when things are allied ! But quarrels are only apparent. In fact, necessarily, all

* Mother's Weekly Talks to the Children of the Ashram

powers that come from higher regions are allied. I think you know what "allied" means ? It means "in harmony for obtaining a certain result".

In the last two wars, the world wars, the big nations came to an agreement to fight together against the enemy and were called allied powers, they were even called in brief "the allies". If you know this, you understand Sri Aurobindo's subtle meaning. It is this that in man knowledge and wisdom are allies, united, in harmony to fight against ignorance.

In the next two sentences it is said clearly enough, for one who understands, that one of these powers belongs to the mind and the other to the Spirit. It is just this, the profound truth that Sri Aurobindo seeks to reveal in his aphorism, this that if the mind wants to have the second power it cannot, for that is a power belonging to the Spirit and takes birth in the human being with the spiritual consciousness.

Knowledge is something that the mind can get with much effort, even then it is not the true Knowledge, but a mental aspect of the Knowledge; whereas Wisdom does not at all belong to the mind, the mind is absolutely incapable of having it, because in truth it does not even know what Wisdom is. I repeat then, Wisdom is essentially a power of the Spirit and is born only with the spiritual consciousness.

Two other questions have been put to me. They are purely verbal, that is to say, they have been put by people who do not quite understand the use of images in style. Someone has asked, "what is the meaning of 'the eye of divine vision' " ? The eye is not the physical eye ! It means the capacity to see, it means the concentrated gaze upon something. The divine vision is a quality of vision, it is not a locality ! The eye of divine vision is a poetic way of saying that the divine or spiritual consciousness has its own way of seeing things, which is certainly not the mental way, much less the physical way. Therefore there is no question of a physical eye situated somewhere.

That is all that I have been asked. That does not take us

very far. I expected I would be asked what Sri Aurobindo meant when he said "truth seen in a distorted medium".

Now what is this distorted medium and what becomes of Truth in a distorted medium ?

As always, what Sri Aurobindo says can have several senses one superimposed upon another, one more particular, the other more general.

In the most particular sense, the distorted medium is that of the mind which works in the ignorance and therefore is incapable of expressing the truth in its purity. But as all life in its entirety is lived in the ignorance, the distorted medium is also the earthly atmosphere that wholly distorts the truth seeking to express itself through that. And here is the most subtle point of the phrase. What can the mind seize by groping ? We know that it gropes always, tries to know, makes mistakes, tries again, tries in the old way, tries in other ways, but...it is a march very very wavering, but what can it seize of the Truth ? Is it a fragment, a portion, something which remains as the Truth, although, partial, incomplete or is it something which is not the Truth ? That is the most interesting point.

We have been accustomed to hear, perhaps we also have repeated it often, that one can have only partial, incomplete, fragmentary knowledge which therefore cannot be the true knowledge. This is a very commonplace point of view and one needs only a little study of one's life to be convinced of it, but what Sri Aurobindo means by saying "truth seen in a distorted medium" is much more interesting than that.

It is this that Truth itself changes its aspect, the very truth is no longer the truth in that medium, but a deformation of the truth; and therefore what one can seize of it is not a portion that would be true, but a false aspect or appearance of a truth that has itself vanished.

I shall give you an image to make myself understood. It is only an image nothing more, do not take it literally.

If we compare the essential Truth to a sphere of white light,

dazzling and spotless, we may say that in the mental medium, in the atmosphere of the mind this light that is white and whole is transformed into thousands and thousands of shades each having its distinct colour, because they are separated from each other. The medium has distorted the white light and shows it as innumerable different colours, red, green, yellow, blue etc. etc., that are at times utterly discordant; and the mind takes hold, not of a little particle of the white light and the white sphere, but more or less of some only of the small lights of different colours with which it cannot even reconstitute the white light; therefore it cannot reach the truth. It is not fragments of the Truth that it possesses, but a disintegrated truth; it is a state of disintegration.

The Truth is a whole and all is necessary. The distorted medium through which you see, the mental atmosphere is not suited to manifest, to express or even to perceive all the elements, —and one can say that it is the best that escapes. That can no longer be called truth, but something which is essentially true but which is not at all that in the mental atmosphere, it is ignorance.

So I will say, in brief, that the Knowledge that human mind can seize is necessarily a knowledge in the ignorance, one may almost say that it is an ignorant knowledge.

Wisdom is the vision of the Truth in its essence and in its application in the manifestation.

II

> "Inspiration is a slender river of brightness leaping from a vast and eternal knowledge; it exceeds reason more perfectly than reason exceeds the knowledge of the senses".

A certain number of questions are put: "Why has Sri Aurobindo said like that ?"... etc., etc.

I could reply, "He has said like that because he has seen like

that". But one thing you must understand before we begin; the definitions that Sri Aurobindo gives are definitions that he gives most often in a paradoxical form in order to compel us to reflect.

The dictionary gives us definitions which are the ordinary explanations of the words, ordinary understanding and they do not make you reflect. What Sri Aurobindo says is said with a view to breaking the ordinary conception in order to make you touch a deeper truth. A number of questions are thus eliminated.

The effort that you have to make is to try to find the deeper knowledge, the deeper truth that Sri Aurobindo has expressed in this manner, which is not the ordinary manner of defining a word.

I am holding in my hand a few questions, and one, the very first which interests me, because it comes from a thoughtful mind, is the question about the word "knowledge". It compares the use Sri Aurobindo makes of it in the present sentence with the one in the sentence we read last week.

When, last week, Sri Aurobindo made an opposition, if one can say so, between knowledge and wisdom, he spoke of knowledge as it is known and practised by the human consciousness in general, the knowledge that one gains by effort and mental growth, while here, on the contrary, the knowledge that he speaks of is the essential Knowledge, the divine supramental Knowledge, the Knowledge by identity. Besides, that is why here he defines it as "vast and eternal", which evidently shows that it is not the human knowledge such as we usually know it.

Many have asked why Sri Aurobindo says that the river is *slender*. It is in order to make an expressive image, a striking opposition between the immensity of the divine supramental knowledge, the origin of the inspiration that is infinite and that which the human mind can receive and perceive of it. Even when one is in contact with these domains, the quantity of what one perceives is so small, so slender; it is like a small stream, or just a few drops that fall, drops that are so pure, so shining, so complete in themselves that they give you the perception of a

wonderful inspiration, the impression that you have touched the domains of infinity and that you have been lifted infinitely above the ordinary human condition,—and yet it is nothing in comparison with what has to be perceived.

I have been asked also if it is the psychic being or psychic consciousness that serves as the medium through which inspiration is received. Generally, yes. The first contact that one has with the higher regions is a psychic contact. Certainly it is difficult to have inspirations before there is an inner psychic opening. It can happen as an exceptional case and under exceptional circumstances, as a Grace, but the true contact occurs through the psychic, because the psychic consciousness is the medium in closest relation with the divine Truth.

Subsequently, when you have come out of the mental consciousness into the higher consciousness beyond the mind, even beyond the higher mind, when you open to the regions of the Overmind and through the Overmind to the Supermind, you can directly receive the inspirations, and naturally at that time they become more frequent, more packed, one may say, more complete. Then comes a time when one can get the inspiration at will but evidently that requires a considerable inner development.

The inspiration, as we have just said, that comes from regions well above the mind, exceeds in value and quality, the very highest which the mind can produce, like reason. Reason is certainly at the summit of the human mental activity; it can criticise and control such knowledge as is acquired through the senses. It has been said very often that the senses as means of knowledge are quite defective, they cannot perceive things as they are, the information they give is superficial and often mistaken. Reason in man, when it is fully developed knows that and does not put its trust in the knowledge of the senses. It is only when one is infrarational, if I may say so, that one believes that all that one sees, all that one hears, all that one touches is absolutely true. As soon as you grow into reason or into the higher reason, you know that all these notions are almost essentially wrong and you can in no way

make them the basis. But the knowledge that one receives from the supramental or divine region surpasses all that reason can conceive and understand, at least as much as reason surpasses the knowledge of the senses.

There are some questions that concern a practical point: "How to develop the faculty of inspiration ? What are the conditions for receiving the inspiration and is it possible to have it constantly ?"

I have already answered that. When you are open to the supramental regions, you put yourself in the condition in which you can have inspirations constantly. Till then the best method is to silence the mind as much as one can, to turn upward and be in a state of silent and attentive receptivity. The more one can establish in the mind a silent, perfect calm, the more one is able to receive inspirations.

I have been asked also if inspirations are of different qualities.

In their origin, no. It is always something that comes down from regions of pure Knowledge and enters into the most receptive part in the human being, the most fit to receive, but these inspirations may be applied to different domains of action. It may be inspirations of pure knowledge, it may be inspirations that help your progress, your effort towards progress and it can be also inspirations for actions to do, for helping in the practical and outward realisation. But here the question is about the use to which inspiration is put rather than the quality of the inspiration—the inspiration is always like a drop of light and truth that succeeds in entering into the human consciousness.

What the human consciousness will make of this drop depends upon the attitude, the need, the occasion, the circumstances. That does not change the essential nature of the inspiration, but that changes the use that one makes of it, its practical use.

There are some questions bearing on the difference between inspiration and intuition. They are not the same thing. But I think we shall have occasion to come back to the subject in the course of our reading, and when Sri Aurobindo says what he considers to be intuition we shall speak of it again.

In a general and almost absolute way, if you want truly to profit by this reading, or for the matter of that, by reading any of Sri Aurobindo's writings, the best method is this : Gather together your consciousness and fix the attention upon what you read, establish then a minimum, at least, of mental tranquillity,—if you can get a perfect silence, that is the best,—and come to such a state of cerebral immobility that the attention becomes like the surface of absolutely peaceful water. Then the thing read passes through the surface and penetrates deep into the being so that it may be received there with the minimum of deformation. Thereafter, sometimes long after, it rises out of the depths and manifests in the head with its full power of understanding, not as a knowledge acquired from outside, but as a light that one carried within oneself.

In this way the faculty of understanding is at its maximum, while if in reading the mind remains agitated and tries to reason out and understand immediately what is read, you lose more than three-fourths of the force, the knowledge and the truth contained in the words. And if you can put questions only when this process of absorption and inner reawakening has been completed, you will find out that there are much less things to ask, because you will have understood better what you have read.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

A GREAT GOD HAS BEEN RELEASED

Rg Veda V. 1

Translation and Explanation

1. Agni by the fuel heaped by the peoples has awakened towards the coming Dawn as towards the sun-cow coming; like the waters spouting up for wide flowing, his flames move towards the heaven.

2. The priest of the offering awoke for sacrifice to the gods, Agni stood up high in the dawn and perfect-minded; the gathered force of him was seen reddening when he was entirely kindled; a great god has been released out of the darkness.

3. When so he has put forth the tongue of his multitude, pure is the activity of Agni with the pure herd of his rays; then is the goddess discerning yoked to her works in a growing plenty; she upward-straining, he high-uplifted, he feeds on her with his flaming activities.

4. Towards Agni move the minds of the seekers after the Godhead, as their eyes move in the Surya; when the two unlike Dawns bring him forth, he is born a white steed of being in the van of the days.[1]

5. He is born full of delight at the head of the days helpful in the helpful gods, active in those that take their joy; in each

[1] *or,* at the head of our forces.

of our homes establishing his seven ecstasies Agni, priest of the offering, takes seat in his might for the sacrifice.

6. Mighty for sacrifice Agni of the offerings takes his seat in the lap of the Mother, in that rapturous middle world, young and a seer, seated in many homes of his dwelling, full of the Truth, upholding our actions and therefore kindled in the mid-spaces.

7. Verily, it is this Agni, the illumined seer who perfects us in these lower activities, the master of offering, that they adore with obeisances and submission; who stretched out the double firmament by the force of the Truth, him they strengthen[1] with the rich droppings, the eternal master of substance.

8. Strong ever, he grows stronger housed in his own seat in us, and home, our guest auspicious to us; master-bull with the thousand horses of thy flame, strong with that Strength, O Agni, by thy might thou art in front of all others.

9. At once, O Agni, thou passest beyond all others in him to whom thou makest thyself manifest in thy splendid beauty, adorable and full of body and widely luminous, the beloved guest of the human peoples.

10. To thee, O vigorous Agni, the continents[2] bring their oblation from near and bring from afar; perceive the perfected mind in one most happy, for wide and mighty is the blessed peace of thee, O Agni.

11. O luminous Agni, mount today thy perfect and luminous chariot with the masters of the sacrifice; thou knowest those paths, bring then hither through the wide mid-world the gods to eat of our offerings.

[1] *or*, brighten [2] *or*, the peoples

12. Utterance have we given to the word of our delight for the seer who hath understanding, for the lord who is mighty; firm in the light one by submission to him reaches in Agni a fixity, even as in heaven, so here golden bright and vast-expanding.

Explanation

The awakening of the divine Force and its action in a man is in this hymn rather indicated than described. The sukta is purely lyric in its character, ***vaco vandāru***, an expression of delight and adoration, a stoma, or stabilising mantra intended to fix in the soul the sevenfold delight of Agni, *damedame sapta ratnā* (rik 5) and assure that state of perfected and happy mentality, pure in perception, light and calm in the emotional parts, *bhandiṣṭasya*, the summation of the truth rik which the divine force dwelling in us abidingly assures to our conscious being. The image of the physical morning sacrifice is maintained throughout the first two riks, but from its closing phrase, *mahān devastamaso niramoci* the Rishi departs from the ritualistic symbol and confines himself to the purely psychological substance of his thought, returning occasionally to the physical aspects of Agni but only as a loose poetical imagery. There is nothing of the close symbolic parallelism which is to be found in some hymns of the Veda.

Abodhi agniḥ samidhā janānām prati dhenum iva āyatim uṣāsam yahvā iva pra vayām ujjihānāḥ pra bhānavaḥ sisrate nākam accha. (1)

Force, pure, supreme and universal has in man, awakened; divine power is acting, revealed, in the consciousness of the creature, borne into matter, *janānām*. It wakes when the first has been perfectly heaped, *abodhi samidhā*,—that power, plenty and richness of being on which this cosmic force in us is fed and which minister to intensity and brightness. It wakes towards

the coming dawn of illumination, as to the Sun cow, the cow of Surya, the illumination of the ideal life and the ideal vision entering the soul that works imprisoned in the darkness of Matter. The flames of the divine activity in us are pointing upwards towards heaven, mounting up from the lower levels of our being to the heights of the pure mind, *sisrate nākam accha*, and their rising is like the wide gushing up into manifestation of waters that have been hidden. For it is a great god that has been released out of the darkness, *mahān devastamaso niramoci.*

The two familiar images in *dhenu* and in *yahvā* are intended to convey directly in one, suggest obliquely by the simile in the other, the inseparable companionship of divine power with the divine light and the divine being. All the gods are indeed *uṣarbudhah*; with the morning of the revelation all divine faculties in us arise out of the night in which they have slept. But the figure here is that of awakening towards the coming dawn. The illumination has not touched the mortal mind, it is on its way, approaching, *āyatīm*, like a cow coming from a distance to its pasture; it is then that the power divine stirs in its receptacle, seizes upon all that is available in the waking consciousness of the creature and, kindled, streams up towards the altitudes of the pure mind in the face of the coming divine knowledge which it rises to meet. Divine knowledge, revealing, inspiring, suggesting, discerning, calls up the godlike ideal activity in us which exceeds man's ordinary motions,—wakes it even before it actually occupies this mortal system, by its far-off touch and glimmer on the horizon; so too divine, inspired and faultless activity in us rises heavenward and calls down God's dawn on His creature.

This great uprush of force is in its nature a great uprush of divine being; for force is nothing but the power of being in motion. It is the secret waters in us that released, gush up openly and widely from their prison and their secrecy in our mortal natures; for in vitalised matter, in mind enmeshed in material vitality, the ideal and spiritual self are always concealed and await release and manifestation; in this mortal that immortal is

covered and curtained in and lives and works behind the veil, *marteṣu devam amartyam.* Therefore is the uprush of divine force in the great release felt to be the wide uprush of divine being and consciousness, *yahvā iva pra vayam ujjihānāḥ.*

Abodhi hotā yajathāya devān ūrdhvo Agniḥ sumanāḥ prātar asthāt samiddhasya ruśad adarśi pājo mahān devastamaso niramoci (2)

The purpose of the waking is next emphasised. It is for divine action in man that God's force awakes in us. It is the divine priest of the offering who stands up in the dawn of the illumination to offer to the gods, to each great god his portion, to Indra a pure and deified mentality, to Vayu a pure and divine vital joy and action, to the four great Vasus, Varuna, Mitra, Bhaga and Aryaman the greatnesses, felicities, enjoyments and strengths of perfected being, to the Ashwins the youth of the soul and its raptures and swiftnesses, to Daksha and Saraswati, Ila, Sarama and Mahi the activities of the Truth and Right, to the Rudras, Maruts and Adityas, the play of physical, vital, mental and ideative activities. Agni has stood up in the dawning illumination high uplifted in the pure mentality, *ūrdhva,* with a perfected mind, *sumanāḥ.* He purifies in his rising the temperament and fixes on it the seal of peace and joy; he purifies the intellectuality and makes it fit to receive the activity of the illuminating Truth and Infinite Rightness which is beyond intellect. Great is the god who has been released out of the darkness of this Avidya, out of this our blind bodily matter, out of this our smoke-enveloped vital energy, out of this our confused luminous murk of mortal mind and sense-enslaved intelligence. *Mahān devastamaso niramoci.* For now that he has been perfectly kindled, it is no longer God's occasional flamings that visit our nature, but His collected and perfect force, *pājaḥ,* that is seen reddening in our heavens.

The first verse is preoccupied with the idea of the self-illumination of Agni, the *bhānavaḥ,* the flames of Force manifesting Knowledge as its essential nature—for Force is nothing but Know-

ledge shaped into creative energy and the creations of energy, and veiled by its shape, as a man's soul is veiled by his mind and body which are themselves shapes of his soul. In the words *abodhi, vāyam, nākam,* in the relation of Agni to Usha and the emphasis on the illuminative character of Usha as the Sun Cow, this aspect of illumination and manifestation is stressed and enlarged. In the second verse the native aspect of the divine Force as a mighty power of action consummating and purifying is brought out with an equal force and insistence. It is as the Hota, that Agni awakes; in this illumination of the dawn that comes with him to man, *prātaḥ,* he stands up with the intellect and emotional temperament perfected and purified, sun for the great offering of man's whole internal and external life and activity to God in the gods, *yajathāya devān,* fulfilling the upward impulse, *ūrdhva,* which raises matter towards life, life towards mind, mind towards ideality and spirit, and thus consummating God's intention in the creature. In the next verse the nature of this human uplifting, this upward straining of the mind through heart and intellect to ideal Truth and Love and Right, is indicated and particularised in an image of great poetical force and sublimity.

(to be continued)

SRI AUROBINDO

SRI AUROBINDO LITERATURE (II)

The Mother

THOUGH slender in volume, this work occupies a key position in the Yoga literature of Sri Aurobindo. For, it lays down in detail the steps of the Sadhana, the indispensible discipline that is to be practised if one is to realise the object of this Yoga which is nothing less than the transformation of human life into a divine living.

The task is formidable, indeed, impossible to achieve by human effort alone. It is only the Divine Shakti who is at work in the universe, in the Creation projected by herself and led by herself for the fulfilment of her own Purpose, that can accomplish it. She is to be invoked and in her hands placed the sadhana. But there are conditions in which alone the Supreme Shakti would act.

There must be, in the first place, an *aspiration* in you for the higher Truth. It is not enough that the aspiration is there; it must be intense, it must pervade more and more all the parts of your being so that the whole is afire with a live incessant call for the Divine Power to manifest itself.

Consistent with this dynamic aspiration you have to learn to *surrender* yourself to the Higher Shakti. You must gather up all your movements and deliver yourself to the Power with a complete submission to its Will and command. The surrender must be active, cooperative, not tamasic and inert. There must be besides an exclusive self-opening to the Divine working and to no other. It defeats your purpose if you invoke the Divine Power on one hand and at the same time allow in you movements that are alien to the Truth of your seeking. At every step there has to be a *rejection* of all that proceeds from what

is not the Truth, not the Light. The rejection has to be entire. There should be no acceptance or even sympathy anywhere in you with any element of falsehood and ignorance.

This triple labour of aspiration, rejection and surrender is the contribution demanded of you. For although it is true that it is the Divine Shakti who really carries out the sadhana in you, yet so long as you remain subject to the lower nature your personal effort is indispensable; you have to exert to overcome this nature. And in proportion as you rise over it and place yourself in the charge of the Higher Power, your effort is gradually replaced by the working of the Shakti. And there is no limit to the wonders that the Shakti, the Divine Grace, can effect in you. Only from your side is asked a constant faith, sincerity and utter surrender. The more complete they are, the more secure the protection and sure the progress.

The ideal sadhaka is one who is conscious of the Divine not only in himself but everywhere. All is Divine in origin and all has to be won back for the Divine releasing it from the hold of the lords of Ignorance and Falsehood. Of the forces and powers put out from the Divine, the most usurped and the most misused are the forces of Wealth, Power and Sex. The seeker of the integral path has not to renounce but to exert and reconquer them, yoke them to the Purpose of the Divine. And this you can do only if you are free from the taint of desire and attachment, attain an equality of mind and purity of heart.

To be a true worker of the Divine one needs to be totally free from desire and ego, the twin main springs of normal human activity. A perfect doer of Divine Works is one who is perfectly identified with the Divine Consciousness. But such an identification can only come as a culmination of a self-giving process. In the beginning of this sadhana, the sadhaka does the work that is given him as work for the Divine Mother. He seeks no personal gain. To do service to Her, to offer works to Her is its own reward. Her pleasure is his fulfilment. In time the sense of his being a worker gradually recedes and the con-

sciousness of an instrument replaces it. His increasing devotion for the Mother brings about such an inner contact and intimacy that he has only to refer things to Her and he receives Her instant guidance. Not only guidance, but also the force to effectuate it. The sadhaka begins to realise that all powers and faculties are only channels for Her Force and action. And as this closeness and identification with the Mother increase in their pervasion and intensity, the sadhaka feels no longer a worker or a servant or an instrument. He feels and realises in his being, that he is a child of Hers, truly a part of Her Consciousness. All his movements are consciously felt to be Her Movement. He is just a mould of Her Knowledge, Her Force, Her Ananda.

Who is the Divine Mother to whom the seeker is called upon to make a complete surrender and who carries him safe in Her arms through the perilous path ? How is She felt and seen ? How does She work and pour Herself in the human vessel ? Sri Aurobindo reveals this Knowledge in the last and the major part of the work which is aptly described as the *mātṛ upaniṣad*. Here in one matchless prose poem winging out of his luminous Seer-Vision, he lays bare the secret lore of the Manifestation of the Divine Mother for the liberation and perfection of man and the révelation of the Supreme on earth.

II

The Consciousness-Force of the One Supreme Being is the Mother of all creation. For it is this Divine conscious Force, Shakti, that brings the worlds into manifestation out of the Being, upbears and leads them in their career, in a word mothers them. There are three ways of Her being in which it is possible to be aware of Her. She has three statuses :

Transcendent, She is above all the worlds, linking the Supreme Being to all creation. She it is who bears the Supreme in her consciousness, calls and holds the truths to be manifested and casts them into form. All is Her Lila with the Lord.

Universal, She spreads Herself out as the substance and the soul of each universe of Her creation. It is Her presence that gives life and meaning to All, Her movement that gives direction.

Individual, She embodies in Herself both the transcendent and the universal ways of Her existence and makes their Power operative here for the manifestation of the Divine in each individual form. She descends in person into the world of Ignorance in order to uplift and release it from the Falsehood and obscurity into which it has sunk.

The Divine Mother has many aspects, many personalities that severally express the plenitude of her oceanic Being. Of these, Sri Aurobindo points to the Four which have most to do and are incessantly active for the evolution of this universe towards its destined goal of Perfection in the verities of Knowledge, Power and Ananda. They are Maheshwari, Mahakali, Mahalakshmi and Mahasaraswati.

Maheshwari is the Personality who presides over the infinite expanses of Knowledge. She builds the human soul and nature into the Divine Truth and opens out our summits into the splendours of the supreme Light.

Mahakali embodies an all-effectuating Power and Will, Hers is the divine Warrior-Force that smashes all obstruction and speeds upward human aspiration and effort.

Mahalakshmi is the soul of all Beauty and Harmony in creation. It is She who manifests the hidden Bliss in life and prepares the receptacles for the divine Ananda.

Mahasaraswati holds in Herself an inexhaustible capacity for flawless work and exact perfection. Nearest of the Four to physical Nature, She is concerned with organisation, execution and construction, all of which she carries out with a thoroughness that is integral.

Sri Aurobindo's narration of the characteristics of these Four Powers of the Divine Mother, their ways of working, their conditions to manifest, their mission of love and labour for man, forms

one of the most enthralling pieces of spiritual literature of all time.

There are other Powers too of the Divine Mother. But they are more in the background and could manifest only when these Four have established and founded their harmony. Then is their supramental action possible which alone can finally deliver the thrice bound nature into the dynamic freedom of the Spirit.

If you seek this transformation, be surrendered absolutely in the hands of the Divine Mother ; be always conscious in every part of your being,—mind, soul, life, the very cells of the body-conscious of the presence of the Mother and the workings of her Powers ; and be plastic to Her touch, ever pliant to comply with the demands of Her Force, to be shaped at all moments and in all movements in the mould of Her choice. For only so can the supreme Truth, Light and Ananda be brought down into this world of falsehood, obscurity and suffering, and human nature transmuted into a divine supernature.

M. P. PANDIT

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MOTHER

XI

EDUCATION

(III)

ANOTHER crippling defect of modern education is that it has no knowledge of human psychology to proceed upon. It not only ignores the heart and the soul of the student, but also the development of the various faculties and functions of his mind itself, which it utilises as the chief or only instrument of learning. The human mind has four layers—chitta, manas, buddhi and intuition. Modern education knows precious little of these layers and their characteristic workings, let alone the method of developing them and leading them to their perfection.

Chitta is the passive or potential memory in us, the store-house of all our past and present impressions or samskaras. It is on this store-house that the active memory draws for its constant functioning. Much of it lies in the subconscious, which has an amazing capacity for taking in and retaining the impressions and images of our sense mind. It plays a great but an almost unsuspected role in the education of children.

Mind or manas is the sixth sense of Indian psychology. "The function of the mind is to receive the images of things translated into sight, sound, smell, taste and touch...and translate these again into thought-sensations. It receives also images of its own direct grasping and forms them into mental impressions."[1] It is upon these sensations and impressions that thought works. If the senses do not work properly, or the reception by the mind of the senses' reports is not perfect, the material upon which thought has to work becomes necessarily faulty. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that children should be taught how to use and

[1] Sri Aurobindo and the Mother on Education

perfect the six senses, including the mind, and render them as sensitive and efficient as possible.

Buddhi or the intellect can be called the chief instrument of thought. It arranges and deals with the material collected by the mind. "The intellect is an organ composed of several groups of functions, divisible into two important classes : the functions and faculties of the right-hand, the functions and faculties of the left-hand. The faculties of the right-hand are comprehensive, creative and synthetic; the faculties of the left-hand critical and analytic. To the right-hand belong judgment, imagination, memory, observation; to the left-hand comparison and reasoning. The right-hand faculties comprehend, command, judge in their own right, grasp, hold and manipulate. The right-hand mind is the master of the knowledge, the left-hand its servant. The left-hand touches only the body of knowledge, the right-hand penetrates its soul. The left-hand limits itself to ascertained truth, the right-hand grasps that which is still elusive and unascertained. Both are essential to the completeness of the human reason."[1]

Modern education has tended more and more towards using the left-hand faculties of criticism and analysis, and leaving the right-hand ones to languish in neglect. But it does little, as I have already said, to bring about a systematic development even of the left-hand faculties which it uses; for it does not quite know what they are and how they can be developed. It is the scientific spirit of the age which is responsible for imparting to the human mind a general love of acuteness and precision in observation, thought and expression. Modern education has profited by this gift of the scientific spirit to a certain extent, but it has not thought it necessary to supplement and enrich it by its own independent researches. But this influence of science on education, however beneficial it has been in some directions, has also had a withering effect on its deeper aims, and lured it from its moorings in the higher values. Though the powers of reasoning have somewhat gained

[1] Sri Aurobindo and the Mother on Education

in sharpness, they have lost in breadth and range, and in the capacity for penetrating to the roots of intellectual problems. In fact, unenlightened by the power of synthesis, analysis becomes anaemic and tenuous; and without the light of intuition, reasoning becomes dry and dogmatic, and even fanatical in its faith in its own rationality. The right-hand and the left-hand faculties must receive a simultaneous development for a perfect and harmonious functioning of the human intelligence.

The fourth layer is intuition. It is the highest faculty in the human consciousness. But it is very little developed. It is distrusted by the critical reason of modern man, and chilled by his superior scorn. Its sudden sallies into our outer mind are sometimes amazing in their brilliance, and baffle our reason. But, more often than not, it gets clogged or coated with the inferior stuff of our mind, and appears to be obscure, erroneous and misleading. The element of genius, which modern education does not know how to deal with in a fruitful way, is closely related to the working of intuition. Even Science, as Einstein says, would not be what it is but for the gleams and flashes of intuition. "The supreme test of the physicist," he writes, "is to arrive at...universal elementary laws from which the cosmos can be built up by pure deduction. There is no logical path to these laws : only intuition, resting on sympathetic understanding of experience, can reach them." In fact, no decisive advance in any department of knowledge has ever been possible without the intervention of intuition.[1&2] If intuition often appears to be obscure and misleading, that is no reason why it should be left undeveloped. Our reason, too, not unoften, goes wrong, and our senses mislead us; but we do not cease to develop and perfect their functionings. Whatever the trips and misfire it is often charged with, this superrational, creative faculty of intuition is an inestimable gift, which we should not fail to prize; and its systematic development must

[1] "It is by logic that we prove, but by intuition that we discover"--Poincaré

[2] "It is. . . . .by intuition that we discover."--Plank

be one of the main objectives of an intelligent method of education. Intuition will open new doors to education, and lead it from the gross to the subtle, from the visible to the vast Invisible, from the known little to the unknown Infinite. Without the development of intuition, there is no possibility of achieving the integration of personality, the harmonious coordination of all the parts and powers of man, which seems to be the avowed goal of the most progressive thought of the modern age. Developed and purified, intuition will illimitably extend the horizons of human consciousness and the frontiers of human existence, enabling man to evolve world mind, a world view, and a sort of universal life, in a spiritual unity with all beings.

Among the powers of the intellect, we have named imagination. This power merits more than a passing mention. It is one of the most pregnant powers of the buddhi. It is that power of our consciousness, which projects itself into the unknown, and brings back messages and intimations of unrealised but realisable truths. It is like a glance of the mind shot into the dimness of the future. It is the faculty of forming images or representations of the realities that lie beyond the ordinary human ken. It is one of the best means of progress we command. But for it, all arts and literature would have remained in sterile stagnation, or described futile circles of self-repetition or naturalistic imitation. "A man to be greatly good," says Shelley, "must imagine intensely and comprehensively; he must put himself in the place of another and of many others; the pains and pleasures of his species must become his own. The great instrument of moral good is imagination; and poetry administers to the effect by acting upon the cause. Poetry enlarges the circumference of the imagination by replenishing it with thoughts of ever new delight..." The Mother says, "Your imagination always goes ahead of your life. When you think of yourself, usually you imagine what you would like to become—that comes first, the prevision, and then you follow it up; you continue to imagine and realise, realise and imagine. Imagination opens the

way to realisation."[1] It is very difficult to move unimaginative people. They see only what is just in front of their noses, they feel only what is there at a given moment. They cannot advance, they are blocked by the immediate present. It is imagination that makes the whole difference."[2]

Modern man has almost lost the faculty of imagination. His reason has blighted it. His materialistic realism has inhibited its use, and spurned it as a weaver of myth and fiction. That is why he is "blocked" by the immediate present, and his vision is arrested by the objects of his senses. "Modern civilisation", says Alexis Carrel, "seems to be incapable of producing people endowed with imagination, intelligence and courage". Modern arts and literature cannot get beyond the confines of the physical mind of man. They have ceased to be creative—they have become merely critical and analytic, mimetic or mechanical. Imaginative poverty is, indeed, the root cause of the great dearth of creative art and literature in the modern times. It is the cause of the general decay of culture, the enthroning of utility in the place of beauty, and squalid materialistic realism in the place of exalting idealism. Modern man, having lost the faculty of imagination, has lost the power of building cathedrals of stately thought, singing soulful songs of epic height, and rising to sublime splendours of revealing selfexpression. His thoughts sprawl and crawl upon the earth, his songs glorify the gim-cracks of life, and his literary language, stripped of high dignity and grace, affects the bald and frigid downrightness of the speech of the huckster.

If education is to fulfil its mission, it must develop the faculty of imagination to its highest perfection in the students. It will be, in fact, developing the most creative mental faculty in them. For, in the words of the Mother, imagination "sends out, as it were, antannae into a world that is not yet realised, and

[1] The Yoga of Sri Aurobindo, Part VIII, by Nolini Kanta Gupta

[2] Imagination. . . .that high summoner of all possibilities realisable or unrealisable into the field of our ignorance. Sri Aurobindo

they catch hold of something there and draw it here. Naturally, it means an addition to earth's atmosphere, an addition of things that tend towards manifestation."[1] According to the Mother, imagination "is an instrument that one can train and discipline and use at will. It is one of the principal faculties that should be developed and made serviceable."[2]

Another thing which is also ignored and left undeveloped in modern education is the heart of the student. Nothing is done to evoke the noblest feelings and emotions in him. No high ideals are placed before him to bring out the best qualities of his nature. On the contrary, the atmosphere of the educational institutions is usually full of a spirit of selfish competition and an unhealthy scramble for place and prize. It is small wonder that the students naturally carry this spirit over to their adult life, and sow the seeds of disorder and conflict in social life. They are not taught to rescue their emotions from the welter of bio-conscious drives and mean passions.

The centre of a man's being is in his heart, and not in his head. The system of education which addresses itself only to the head of the student, and fails to touch the centre of his being, is not worth the name of education at all, for it does not develop the manhood of the student, but prepares him only for a career or a profession. A crude, stunted, and deformed human material, somewhat quick and sharp on the practical and pragmatic side of its nature, is all that comes out of the machinery of modern university education. Smartness and cleverness are made to do duty for intelligence. Neither environment, nor the method of teaching, nor the contact of the teachers, which is anything but close and intimate, fosters the noble feelings of the heart—kindness, gentleness, forbearance, tolerance, fellow-feeling etc. Students are not inspired to feel nobly, to choose and decide unselfishly, and act honestly and sincerely. It is feelings and emotions that determine the behaviour patterns of human beings more than their

[1] & [2] The Yoga of Sri Aurobindo Part VIII, by Nolini Kanta Gupta

thoughts and ideas. No intellectual achievement is of any great value in a person whose feelings are base and unlovely. His intellect, serving his selfish feelings, becomes an accomplice of his lower passions, and contributes to his moral and spiritual degeneracy. The training of the feelings and emotions is, therefore, of the utmost importance in any method of education that seeks to develop the manhood of the student and integrate his personality.

The growing tendency to over-specialisation is another besetting sin of modern education. It stems from the exclusively analytical bent of the modern mind. It is a short-sightedness of consciousness, which makes us concentrate on one aspect of truth or reality to the exclusion of the other aspects. It is a negation of the essential unity of life and the unity of our psycho-somatic organism. It is a movement of ignorance; for the basic truth of existence is that one cannot know a part until one knows the whole. It was a realisation of this basic truth that led the Rishis of yore to declare that the supreme knowledge is the foundation of all knowledge—*para vidyā sarvavidyāpratishthā*. One cannot truly know a single atom until one knows the truth of the whole universe. One cannot know how the eyes, ears, or lungs of a man function until one knows the working of the whole organism; for the parts are interwoven and interacting, and all are inseparably held by an indivisible unity which deploys its multiplying diversity from its living and informing centre. It can also be said that one cannot know the physical organism until one knows the mind which penetrates and enfolds it, and plays an important part in its direction and development. Life is a complex whole, made up of innumerable elements, which are knit together by an intimate bond; and all attempts to separate some of its elements for a special study by the analytical process of the mind, is foredoomed to failure until one possesses the comprehensive knowledge of its unified totality. Specialisation, it is true, promotes a certain minuteness and precision in the analytical part of the intellect, but it does so only at the cost of breadth of vision and completeness of knowledge. It is an atomistic movement, which takes us farther and farther

away from the whole view and whole truth of reality. It can, however, be welcomed as a brilliant achievement, if it is based on a comprehensive and synthetic knowledge,—analysis proceeding in the sure light of a synthetic knowledge and experience.

These are some of the serious defects of modern education. But there is a very grave defect in the education which is imparted in India; and, since I have already referred to it above, I should not pass it by without a little elaboration of its nature and remedy. The education which our children and youths receive is not a product of our culture, and has no roots in the national soil. The spirit and genius of Indian culture does not form its living and inspiring core. It is exotic in its nature, aim and method. It was initiated by the British Government at the beginning of their rule in India, and has been prevailing since, with certain modifications and changes imposed by the awakening national spirit. In recent times, over the last half a century, attempts are being made to orient education to Indian ideals, but it cannot be said that they have met with any very decisive success. The reason of it is that the true spirit of Indian culture has not been fully grasped, its ancient roots have not been discovered. Some educational attempts have erred on the side of a rigid conservatism, and failed to keep pace with the current of modern life; and some have erred on the side of ultra-modernism and an intolerant radicalism, born of an infatuation with the glamorous ways of Western life. There have also been some more sensible attempts to base education on an eclectic blend of the ideals of East and West. But none have gone deep enough to touch the living soul of India and formulate a system of education that will be the means of its spontaneous flowering in the cultural climate and conditions of the present. It is clear that, though spirituality has been and will ever remain the very life-breath of Indian culture, the ascetic brand of it has been played out, for it lacked an integral vision of existence, and the creative vitality that can conquer life for God and His glory. The virile spirituality of the Vedic ages

cannot be revived today, and modern India cannot be dotted again with sylvan hermitages, humming with the Vedic chants and aglow with the Vedic fires. What is needed today is the birth of a fresh, dynamic spirituality in the experience of the pioneers of the modern age—a spirituality at once integral and all-embracing in its vision, and overflowing with a creative vitality, which will grapple with all the problems that perplex modern humanity, and carve out a radiant future out of the chaotic obscurity of the present. It will not be considered vainglorious to assert that it is upon the birth of this new, dynamic, world-transforming spirituality that, not only the safety of the culture of India, but that of the culture and civilisation of the whole world depends. Both the advocates of the Vedic type of education and the eclectics who try to construct a system of education on an amalgam of the ideals of East and West fail to envisage the emergence of a new spirituality, which will be a fulfilment of the past and at the same time powerful enough to meet the manifold challenge of the present, and create a new order of life and a new race of supermen on this fateful planet. And since the birth of a new spirituality can take place only in the experience of one or two prophets or pioneers, it is these heaven-sent individuals that we have to look up to for giving the necessary inspiration or impetus to a general resurgence of spirituality in India and the world, and a reorientation and reconstruction of education. Moral perception and mental conceptions of spirituality cannot bring about the same result. Yoga holds the key to the future of humanity.

The birth of a new spirituality is, indeed, of supreme importance at the present crisis of human culture. And is it not an attested fact that whenever there is a grave crisis in the culture of humanity, a new spiritual Force and a new Light come down to save and redeem ? Does not the truth of Avatarhood confirm this fact and faith ? A. Toynbee is right when he observes that there is always an upsurge of the religious spirit corresponding to a decline in human culture and civilisation. And that upsurge has already begun.

Poverty and hunger, illiteracy and unemployment, all have, of course, to be eliminated, if India is to come to her own; but what has to go first and foremost is the poverty of the soul; what has to be satisfied first is the hunger of the soul; what has to be cured first is the ignorance of the soul and its spiritual catalepsy. The West starts with material amelioration, with the raising of the material standards of living, and gropes its way towards a mental, aesthetic and a general cultural improvement. The typical Indian method is the other way round—it is to awaken the soul first, to discover the Divine, the infinite and eternal Reality, and then flood human nature and life with its luminous, creative abundance. It is this hoary Indian method that must be employed for a reconstruction of our cultural life and education. Vivekananda, who had a remarkable insight into the heart of Indian culture, said :

"Before flooding India with socialistic and political ideas, first deluge the land with spiritual ideas. The first work that demands our attention is that the most wonderful truths confined in our Upanishads, in our scriptures, in our Puranas, must be brought out from the books, brought out from the monasteries, brought out from the forests, brought out from the possession of selected bodies of people, and scattered broadcast all over the land, so that these truths may run like fire all over the country, from north to south and east to west, from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, from Sindh to Brahmaputra."

The soul and the Divine have to be sought with all the intensity and amplitude of aspiration one is capable of, and the divine Light and Force, Love and Beauty and Harmony have to be infused into every fibre of human nature and every movement of human life. Until this typically Indian way of perfection is adopted, Indian culture will continue swaying between the contrary polarities—between the call of Matter and the call of the naked Spirit. As the seed inevitably determines the nature and pattern of the whole tree and its growth and flowering, so does the

supreme Reality, dwelling in the heart of every human being, determine the whole course and purpose of his life. To ignore Him is to ignore the central truth and significance of life, and the secret of a harmonious perfection and fulfilment. And an education that is not founded on spiritual vision, and led by spiritual light, can breed nothing better than nettles and weeds.

These are some of the defects of modern education, which stultify its results and defeat its real purpose. But happily, the educational cloud has also a silver lining. It is an encouraging sign that the progressive educationists all over the world have awakened to some of these defects, and set about finding the right remedy. Many experiments are being made, material and psychological, to make education productive of better results. I shall touch upon a few outstanding of these experiments, and then pass on to a brief consideration of the education that obtained in ancient India.

(*To be continued*)

RISHABHCHAND

THE LIFE DIVINE

An Outline

Vol. II

Chapter XXI

The Order of the Worlds

ADMITTING a spiritual evolution of consciousness and the consequent repeated earthly rebirth, we have to see the relation of this evolution with the general universal movement. For there must be planes of higher being, gradations of the involution, which precede the evolution; and these planes must be in constant communication with the material life. We must now examine the nature of this inter-connection as it effects evolution and rebirth.

The complex nature of existence does not allow us to rest on the idea that the soul descended abruptly into the Ignorance, and hence the return back would be a similar precipitous transit from material world-being into the transcendent Silence.

We can firstly suppose that the soul or souls sought the adventure of the darkness. The All-Soul may thus have been drawn down to build a world based upon the power of the Inconscience, carrying the individual souls within it, to begin their upward evolution. Or if the individual is only a temporary phenomenon, then he is merely formed out of an original indiscriminate Prakriti.

On these suppositions there need be only two planes of existence : a material universe created out of the Inconscient, and a superconscient One to which we return out of the Inconscience and Ignorance. Or if there is no superconscient apart from the soul then only the material plane exists. If we find that other planes exist we might suppose that they were created during the course of the soul's evolutionary ascent. There

would then be an evolution of worlds one out of the other. But this does not explain the devolution of cosmos out of the superconscient Divine Nature.

These inconclusive theories originate from the mind, and do not belong to the original creative power of Spirit—the Real-Idea. Mind and life are also powers of the Spirit as well as the material world. They can create worlds of a supraphysical nature. Secondly it is the Cosmic Being or Transcendent Divinity that is the real creator, and not the Individual; for the individual depends on the universal and only a Cosmic Being can uphold cosmos.

The participating Individual must have been awake in the superconscient before the world existed. Then a will may have stirred it and compelled the creation of the world of Ignorance. But the souls are beings of the One Being; and the universe becomes a field for the individual. The Many are not independent from the One, and must be activitated by the All-Will. Thus the One had first to accept the inconscient Nature before the Individual can put on the veil of the Ignorance.

The Will of the supreme and cosmic Being is thus the indispensable condition and not Desire as the Creative principle. Desire can only belong to the incomplete evolutionary ego which is a product of the Cosmic action. The All-being cannot be limited merely to manifestation in a material universe; for the soul is evolving upwards through diverse forms of life and mind which have themselves arisen out of the One in the material universe. Otherwise there would be no Superconscience and no supraphysical principles exterior to Matter.

If life and mind are products of Matter, or have resulted through the evolution from the Inconscience then they would only be transitionary bridges in the ascent. But mind and life are too different to be products of Matter; they must be independent products of the spiritual Energy of cosmic Spirit. Spirit must therefore be capable of manifesting on the Mind principle or on the Life principle as well as on the principle of Matter.

We must then ask whether, if these worlds exist, they have descended in a serial order between Matter and Spirit. And is there an interaction of the higher worlds on the world of Matter ? There is a very ancient belief in the existence of other worlds and the possibility of communication with them. Only in the recent purely rationalistic period has this belief been swept aside as superstition ; and only Matter and the material world came to be considered as real. All else would then be subjective.

But it is illogical to demand a physical proof of a supraphysical fact. The supraphysical can impinge on the physical world and produce physical results but this cannot be its normal process. It has in fact to act through life and mind parts that are of the same order as itself. Through the subtle sense it acts in the outward physical sense. Such is, for example, the faculty of second sight. These are the subtle means beyond the physical mind, by which we can communicate with other planes of being.

It might be argued that the subjective or subtle-sense experience can be deceptive since there is no recognised standard of verification. But error also belongs to the physical mind and its objective standards. We have therefore to find the true standards and means of verification of the subjective. In fact the subjective being is the basis of our objective experience. The subliminal consciousness is a witness to truth and its testimony has been confirmed in the physical field. But past beliefs are not sufficient for our present inquiry. Supraphysical truth—as well as physical—must be founded on experience, appropriate to its own order of truth, and verified according to its own law, and not according to the law of another domain or consciousness.

Comparing our inner experience with the past knowledge of the supraphysical we find that this inner experience conveys to us the existence of larger planes of being and consciousness which are not separate from our own being. They have their

own play and process; yet at the same time they envelop the physical plane with their invisible presence and influences. There are the purely subjective experiences, and also there are the more objective ones. In the subjective order we find that what shapes itself as life-impulse already exists in a larger, more subtle range of possibilities which are pressing to realise themselves in the physical world also. But only a part succeeds in emerging, modified by the terrestrial law. Normally we are not aware of the action of these Powers and Influences upon us, but take them as formations of our own life and mind. Only when we go inwards and develop subtler senses do we get an intimation of the origin of these movements, and can accept, reject or modify them. Thus we become aware of larger domains of mind teeming with all possible mental formulations. We receive a pressure of ideas, suggestions, impulsions, part of which is supraterrestrial in character.

There is also the subjective-objective opening to the worlds themselves. They are worlds organised as our own, but on a different plan and different law of action. There are beings who manifest themselves in the substance of the supraphysical Nature, a subtle substance. They may exercise no action on us, but also they may enter into secret communication with the earth-existence. They may be instruments of cosmic powers or act by their own initiation on the earth life. We can receive help or misguidance from these beings, sometimes possessed or dominated by them. At times the earth seems a field of battle between supraphysical forces that strive to uplift, and those that strive to prevent the upward evolution. The former we regard as divine and the latter as Titanic or demoniac. We may also be aware of beings that are acting as a hidden element in the terrestrial nature itself. In certain subliminal states of consciousness we can know something of the secrets of these other worlds. In the past these other worldly experiences have been distorted by popular belief and imagination.

But although the forms and symbols of these experiences

differed the general features in all countries and ages have been strikingly similar. They are too insistent and organic in their pressure to be flung aside as hallucination or superstition.

One explanation may be that man creates the supraphysical worlds which he inhabits after death; just as it was thought that God was created by man. They may be imaginations and myths but yet used by the power of the creative Consciousness-force and enduring in a subtly materialised world of thought. If they are only a subjective Consciousness, then our own objective world might also be a myth. All then seems an unreality except the Inconscience which had created them.

There is no proof, however, that man's mind can create a world where there was none before. Mind can strongly influence, but not effect an original creation. What is more likely is that as man's mind grows, it enters into relation with new ranges of being and consciousness, not created by him but already preexistent. He thus opens up new planes of being in himself, receiving direct influences from them. He creates images and symbols of them, with which his mind can deal, —the forms of gods and the Divine Image. These powers can thus transform man's consciousness with the light of their higher being. But this creation of forms is only a revelation of these higher powers to the consciousness on the material plane. It enlarges our subjective life, but there is still the veil separating these higher planes from the material existence. The veil exists so that the soul might concentrate exclusively on its primary work in the physical world before the higher planes penetrate into human existence.

The idea that these worlds were created subsequent to the material cosmos is a notion of the physical mind which starts all its ideas from the material universe. But though Matter is the starting-point of the terrestrial evolution, can we say that the planes of Life and Mind have also arisen out of the Inconscient? But if we accept Consciousness as the real creative Power then the supraphysical worlds must have a reality in

themselves apart from the physical world and plane of physical experience.

In our experience we find that these higher worlds are not based upon the material universe. They are, rather, larger ranges of consciousness, of which the material plane looks more a result than the origin. Although immense powers descend upon the earth only a restricted number can realise themselves in the physical world. The rest await their time and proper circumstance.

We see now that we ourselves are instruments for a progressive manifestation of the Divine in the material being. We do not create the higher planes, but are intermediaries by which they reveal their light, power and beauty in whatever form can be given them on the material plane. Thus the pressure of the life-world develops life forms here; the pressure of the mind-world develops the mental being, gradually enlarging beyond the physical mentality. In the same way the pressure of the supramental and spiritual worlds is preparing to manifest the power of the spirit on the physical plane. It is this pressure alone that can liberate from the Inconscience the all-conscient Godhead concealed in us. Our human consciousness is thus the intermediary in the development of light and power out of the Inconscience.

Certain indications—such as the supraphysical prolongation of earth-experience after death, and the inferior movements of the earth-existence in the life-worlds—seem to point to the fact that the other worlds may not be prior to the material existence. If we find darkness and evil existing in these other worlds we must conclude that they have come into existence by a projection out of the inferior evolution, or that they were already created as part of the involutionary descent as a stairway for the upward evolution. In this latter hypothesis the ascending gradation might have a double purpose : it would contain preformations of good and evil that must evolve on earth as part of the evolutionary growth ; and they would be independent formations though exercising their influence on the evolution.

The worlds of a larger life would have both luminous and darker formations which could arrive at their type's completeness and independence. Impulses which appear here perverse and abnormal find an unrestricted play on their own plane. Discord, struggle and suffering only enter when there is insufficiency. These powers in their own worlds are able to dominate human life because they exist in their full form and native power. Man in a state of struggle and mixture becomes their slave. These are the heavens and hells that man has imagined in a beyond-life.

As the powers of Life, so the powers of Mind have their own Mind-world. Here in the world they throw out only partial formations. The higher worlds are typal; they are not evolutionary. But working out a fullness in their own field, they can cast their elements into the complex process of the evolutionary Nature.

Man's traditional accounts of other-worldly existence point to worlds liberated from the restrictions and imperfections of life in earth-nature. There is here an element of true subliminal contact, indicating what are the potentialities of life. But these contacts are translated by man into his own forms and images through which the realities can influence him. This explains the experience of an after-death continuance of a modified earth-life, which is really a transitory passage before he enters the other-worldly realities. Yet in these traditional accounts there are records of higher states of existence which are of a mental and not a vital character; and even some of a spiritual-mental character. The principle of gradation is thus justified from many points of view. It helps us to understand our own existence, and the course of the involution, as well as the evolutionary motion of Nature. And also the other worlds penetrate and envelop the earth-nature and influence it.

The influence of other worlds are of primary importance for the evolution on earth. For if the physical universe were the only field of manifestation then the evolution would be solely

an unfolding of that which was involved. The principle of Matter would always remain the first principle; and even though Spirit, later became dominant, it would still be dependent upon Matter for its manifestation. It could have no other field. Likewise Life and Mind could not become dominant in their own field. All would be limited by the conditions of the material formation. If Spirit is the creator these principles must have an independent existence.

Since the infinite Reality is free in the play of its consciousness it is not bound to involve itself in matter before it can manifest. It can create a world in which unity of spiritual being is the condition of action. Or it might be a world in which the Spirit's conscious Force or Will would realise its own possibilities. It might be, again, an order of the free play of self-delight in a multiplicity of beings conscious of the joy of oneness. Again it might be a world-order in which the Supermind would be the dominant principle.

As we find in the world that Mind and Life are both hampered by Matter, so we can see that there can be a world-order in which none of these disabilities appear. There is the possibility of a world in which Mind would be free to work on its own substance. So too Life might have its own world-order where it can exercise its instincts of free formation and free adventure. Thus the separate dominance of each principle is an eternal possibility in the manifestation of being.

All our spiritual and psychic experience brings us constant evidence of the existence of higher worlds and freer planes of existence. We see that they are different harmonies, each with a different system and ordering of its principle. The fact that they can enter into the field of our mental consciousness would suggest that they are parts of one complex universal system. We actually find that at every moment they are in communication with our own plane of being, although not apparent to our outer consciousness. We realise it in our subliminal being; and one can project himself into these higher planes even while in the

body. These experiences justify the ancient tradition of a temporary sojourn, at least, in other worlds after death. They also open us to the possibility of the action of higher planes on the material.

These worlds are therefore prior to the physical universe —at least in their consequential sequences. They have not come into being by a pressure from the lower physical universe. Nor are they creations of the human soul itself. Man might indeed project some influence to these higher planes but it would only be a return from earth of powers which have come down to the earth-mind. Man may create a subjective annexe to these supraphysical planes, which would be reflections of his own being. But these would not affect the action of the separate principle.

These systems or planes are coeval and co-existent with the physical universe. Life, mind and spirit in the physical being develop by an upward-tending force from below and a downward-pressing force from above. This pressure from above explains the constant influence of the spiritual, mental and vital worlds—on the physical plane. Such a sevenfold interrelated action is an inevitable consequence of the manifested universe.

The subliminal self is the projection from these higher planes, and consequently receives the influences. In this way life and mind were liberated out of Matter ; and likewise a spiritual consciousness will be liberated. As man grows more inward so the boundaries of his mental, vital and spiritual being broaden and the mental being begins to have a glimpse of a larger kingdom. While he lives on the surface he can only build an imaginative and ideal superstructure. But if he makes the inward movement he will find the larger consciousness and larger life. The double action—from within and from above,—can finally overcome the Inconscience and substitute Spirit for Matter as the foundation of being.

N. PEARSON

REVIEWS

(1)

Sri Aurobindo's Political Thought (1893-1908) by *Prof. Haridas Mukherji and Prof. Uma Mukherji.* Published by K.L. Mukhopadhyaya, 6:1 A, Banchharam Akrur Lane, Calcutta 12. Pages 188. Price Rs. 8:.

If by political thought is meant here a movement of intellect fixing itself on the central idea of liberating the country from alien domination and evolving methods of comprehensive action to that end, then it must be said that Sri Aurobindo was born with this idea which deepened into a feeling and developed with years till he gave to it his first public expression in his talks at the Indian Majlis in Cambridge. 'The feeling', to quote his own words, 'is in the marrow of my bones. God has sent me to earth to do this work, the seed of which first germinated when I was fourteen and it took deep root in me when I was eighteen.' Thus did Sri Aurobindo become conscious of the first part of his life's mission when he was but a teenager in a foreign land. Later, he grew conscious, not long after his return to India, also of 'the power to accomplish the deliverance of my fallen country.' How ? 'By the power of knowledge, *brahmatej*, founded in *jnana*.'

When God's bright heaven full of the vision of the future began to shine on his young soul, he wondered why and how it was coming to him, and tried to trace it to the poetry of Shelley he was then reading. These visions, properly speaking, these mystic intimations which he had when he was eleven, pointed, as Sri Aurobindo himself said, to a period of general upheavals and revolutionary changes in which he would play a leading

part. Years later he realised that they were prompted by a force other than human, and that they were indications of what God intended him to do not only for the liberation of his country but also for the spiritual uplift of the whole human race, the former as a preliminary condition for the latter.

This was the inner meaning of the early phase of the freedom movement in India initiated by Sri Aurobindo. That is why his work for his country's freedom cannot be properly appraised unless its deeper motive is fully understood. To study a part of his work as detached from the whole is not to do justice to that part. This inward and, therefore, the truer, significance of the phenomenon that was Sri Aurobindo must necessarily be kept in view. True, 'his life', as he himself said and those who study it know, 'has never been on the surface for man to see', but what we have from his lips and from his pen is enough for the basis of an approach to his vast thought, vaster in fact than human mind could conceive, being of transcendental origin.

The following are his available writings and speeches in which he has generally dealt with the social and political evolution of India and the world : 1. *New Lamps for Old*, *Bankim Chandra Chatterji*, (both, series of articles in the weekly *Indu Prakash* of Bombay, 1893-94), 2. *Sri Aurobinder Patra* (Bengali letters, 1907, 1921), 3. *Bhawani Mandir*, (1905), 4. Daily *Bande Mataram* (1906-08), 5. Bengali daily *Yugantar* (1906), 6. *Speeches* (1907-9),7. Weekly *Karmayogin*(1909-10), 8.Bengali weekly *Dharma* (1909-10), 9. *The Ideal of Human Unity* (serialised in the *Arya*, 1915-18,) 10. *The Psychology of Social Development* (serialised in the *Arya*, 1916-18, revised, enlarged and published in 1950, under the new title *The Human Cycle*), 11. *War and Self-determination* (first published in 1919), 12 Letter to Joseph Baptista written in 1920, 13. Historical articles including those on the French Revolution, published in the 1954 Number of the *Sri Aurobindo Pathmandir Annual*, 14. *Messages of Sri Aurobindo* from 1942 to 1950 (published as First and Second Series), 15. *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother* (published in 1953).

Besides these, there are innumerable references to the inner meaning of man's collective development—'the human march' as Sri Aurobindo would term it—in his writings on Yoga and Philosophy, and on the ancient sacred texts, in which the discerning eye can perceive the integrality of his vision of the ultimate spiritual perfection towards which, he affirms, man is being led by Nature through various stages. Necessarily, therefore, the political and social stages cannot in that vision be less important than the religious, spiritual and cultural ones.

Sri Aurobindo once said : 'There is to me nothing secular all human activity is for me a thing to be included in a complete spiritual life, and the importance of politics at the present time (1920) is very great.'

Out of 188 pages of the book under review more than 120 reproduce Sri Aurobindo's 9 articles from the *Indu Prakash*, and 15 from the *Bande Mataram*. In his profoundly appreciative introduction Dr. Radhakumud Mukherji, the eminent historian, recalls his memory of Sri Aurobindo as 'the prophet of militant nationalism' to which he gave rise in Bengal and which swept over the whole of India. In their thirtyfive-page study of Sri Aurobindo's political thought the authors have tried to acquaint the readers with the main trends of the articles they have reproduced in the book, by doing which they have earned the gratitude of their countrymen who knew next to nothing of what Sri Aurobindo felt and thought about the political endeavours which the prominent Indians were making in the eighties and nineties of the last century. In his *Indu Prakash* sequence Sri Aurobindo 'vehemently denounced the then Congress policy of prayer, petition and protest and called for a dynamic leadership based upon self-help and fearlessness.' They are also a penetrating analysis of the ideology of the then Congress movement *vis-a-vis* the political developments in France and England reflecting the psychology of the peoples, and all this in illustration of his thesis that any political action to be effective must have behind it the man in the mass. This essential condition the

Congress of the day did not realise. A national movement is the movement of the national being, and for its success it must have the backing of the people and grow out of its inherent genius, following the life-line of its organic existence in history.

But what strikes the reader of these articles most is the impetuous ardour of the writer's soul with which he gave utterance to the depth and intensity of his feeling for his country, its dire decline under alien subjection. Indeed, Sri Aurobindo was impatient to end it; and he would not rest, and he actually did not, till the goal was reached, to be more correct, till he was assured of it by the Divine when He called Sri Aurobindo to the greater work of bringing about the spiritual liberation of the human race, which alone can establish on earth peace, freedom and unity that are for ever. This was to be the fulfilment of the mission on which God sent him to earth and of which he became partly conscious when only a child in England.

In his *Bande Mataram* articles Sri Aurobindo elaborated his original standpoint in the *Indu Prakash* sequence but this time from a larger vision of India the Mother whose freedom, 'complete and absolute', he was the first to declare openly as the sole aim of all political endeavours. 'To Aurobindo', rightly says the authors, 'belongs the credit of first onceiving of *Purna Swaraj* as the ideal for which the country and the Congress must stand.' And what was that ideal ? 'Our ideal', wrote Sri Aurobindo, 'is that of Swaraj or absolute autonomy free from foreign control. We claim the right of every nation to live its own life by its own energies according to its own culture and ideals. We reject the claim of aliens to force upon us a civilisation inferior to our own or keep us out of our inheritance on the untenable ground of a superior fitness. While admitting the stains and defects which long subjection has induced upon our native capacity and energy, we are conscious of that capacity and energy reviving in us. We point to the unexampled national vigour which has preserved the people of this country through centuries of calamity and defeat, to the great actions of our forefathers continued even to

the other day, to the many men of intellect and character such as no other nation in a subject condition has been able to produce, and we say that a people capable of such unheard-of vitality is not one which can be put down as a nation of children and incapables. We are in no way inferior to our forefathers. We have brains, we have courage, we have an infinite and vigorous national capacity. All we need is a field and opportunity. That field and opportunity can only be provided by a national government, a free society and a great Indian culture. So long as these are not conceded to us, we can have no other use for our brains, courage and capacity than to struggle unceasingly to achieve them.' Defining the inner meaning of this ideal Sri Aurobindo wrote : 'Swaraj is the fulfilment of the ancient life of India under modern conditions, the return of the *Satyayuga* of national greatness, the resumption by her of her great *role* of teacher and guide, the self-liberation of the people for the final fulfilment of the Vedantic ideal in politics, this is the true Swaraj for India.' And the larger meaning of this ideal ? 'India does not rise as other countries do, for self or when she is strong, to trample on the weak. She is rising to shed the eternal light entrusted to her over the world. She has always existed for humanity and not for herself and it is for humanity and not for herself that she must be great.' Sri Aurobindo once said that so long as India was not free there could be no real freedom for the whole world.

Enumerating the services of Sri Aurobindo as a political thinker the authors say that his first great service was that 'he could divine the greatest political need of his country, and defined it in the shining ideal of Swaraj. The second great service of his political genius was the clear and logical formulation of a new revolutionary line of action known as "passive resistance". The third great service of the mastermind was the powerful advocacy of a new conception of the country which was not to him a mere "stretch of earth or a mass of individuals", but the divine Mother herself. In his intuitive vision he realised "the motherhood of God in the country", and maddened by that divine ecstasy, he

called his countrymen to see the same "vision of the Mother." With him patriotism was the first impulse and nationalism the supreme religion.' And all these Sri Aurobindo did mainly through his paper *Bande Mataram*, which, as he said, 'was almost unique in journalistic history in the influence it exercised in converting the mind of a people and preparing it for revolution.'

There was another and more important side to Sri Aurobindo's political thought and action which began developing in him when he was in England. It was his idea of an armed rebellion as a means for the attainment of India's freedom. Sri Aurobindo's exposition of this idea and the practical form he gave to it is found in *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother*. Discussing the possibilities of such a revolutionary movement he writes: '...although the British would resist any attempt at self-liberation by the Indian people and would at the most only concede very slowly such reforms as would not weaken their imperial control, still they were not of the kind which would be ruthlessly adamantine to the end : if they found resistance and revolt becoming general and persistent they would in the end try to arrive at an accommodation to save what they could of their empire or in the extremity prefer to grant independence rather than have it forcefully wrested from their hands.'

The first definitive shape that Sri Aurobindo gave to his plan was when in 1902, with the help of one of his lieutenants, he started a revolutionary centre in Calcutta 'with a programme of preparation and action which he thought might occupy a period of thirty years before fruition could become possible. As a matter of fact, it has taken fifty years for the movement of liberation to arrive at fruition and the beginning of complete success.' Even before this, while in Baroda, Sri Aurobindo had made a beginning of revolutionary work in western India. Later in 1907 his younger brother Barindra under his inspiration organised the famous Maniktola centre. Its brief but bold career writes a glorious chapter in the history of India's struggle for freedom.

Sri Aurobindo believed that a subject nation has the right to use any means to attain its freedom. That was why he did not confine his political work to passive resistance alone which he knew had its place and necessity in the wide field of Indian politics at that stage. His aim in the defensive movement was that it should some day develop into an offensive revolutionary action. This is how he evolved his own plan : 'Sri Aurobindo had to establish and generalise the idea of independence in the mind of the Indian people and at the same time push first a party and then the whole nation into an intense and organised political activity which would lead to the accomplishment of that ideal. His idea was to capture the Congress and to make it an instrument for revolutionary action instead of a centre of a timid constitutional agitation which would only talk and pass resolulutions and recommendations to the foreign government ; if the Congress could not be captured, then a central revolutionary body would have to be created which could do this work. It was to be a sort of State within a State giving its directions to the people and creating organised bodies and institutions which would be its means of action ; there must be an increasing non-cooperation and passive resistance which would render the administration of the foreign Government difficult or finally impossible, a universal unrest which would wear down repression and finally, if need be, an open revolt all over the country. This paln included a boycott of British trade, the substitution of national schools for the Government institutions, the creation of arbitration courts to which the people could resort instead of depending on the ordinary courts of law, the creation of volunteer forces which would be the nucleus of an army of open revolt, and all other action that could make the programme complete. The part Sri Aurobindo took publicly in Indian politics was of brief duration, for he turned aside from it in 1910 and withdrew to Pondicherry ; much of his programme lapsed in his absence, but enough had been done to change the whole face of Indian politics and the whole spirit of the Indian people to make independence

its aim and non-cooperation and resistance its method, and even an imperfect application of this policy heightening into sporadic periods of revolt has been sufficient to bring about the victory. The course of subsequent events followed largely the line of Sri Aurobindo's idea. The Congress was finally captured by the Nationalist party, declared independence its aim, organised itself for action, took almost the whole nation minus a majority of Mohammedans and a minority of depressed classes into acceptance of its leadership and eventually formed the first national, though not as yet an independent, Government in India and secured from Britain acceptance for independence for India....'

'The purely political elements of the Nationalist programme and activities were those which lasted and after each wave of repression and depression renewed the thread of the life of the movement for liberation and kept it recognisably one throughout nearly fifty years of its struggle. But the greatest thing done in those years was the creation of a new spirit in the country. In the enthusiasm that swept surging everywhere with the cry of Bande Mataram ringing on all sides men felt it glorious to be alive and dare and act together and hope; the old apathy and timidity was broken and a force created which nothing could destroy and which rose again and again in wave after wave till it carried India to the beginning of a complete victory.'

The master-soul, from whom sprang into being the new revolutionary national spirit which took firm root in the national consciousness and ultimately brought India her independence, retired from active politics in 1910 but the question of his country's freedom and greatness was never out of his mind. Before he left for Pondicherry to prepare for the greater liberation of the country and the world he was certain that India would be free. Now, why did he leave Bengal, his work unfinished ? And what made him certain that India would be free ? The answer is there in the revealing Uttarpara speech. The earlier intimations given him when he was eleven and repeated when he was fourteen and his vision of Vasudev, His call and His assurance in Alipore

Jail, show that he was chosen by the Divine Will to rouse the people to a dynamic sense of revolutionary national spirit of independence and that done, he was called to the next higher phase of the work. Even in his retirement what he did by his Yogic power was to prepare conditions for facilitating the event of India's independence. The victory was there but it could not be a complete one as the work was being opposed by un-Indian forces in India's public life. All that Sri Aurobindo had so far done was but a step towards the larger work he was charged to do for the truer liberation of man, the divine mission of India. But this mission she could not fulfil so long as she herself was in bondage. This was the keynote of whatever Sri Aurobindo did and wrote and spoke as the acknowledged leader of the New National Movement that created in the people a settled will to freedom and greatness.

This is the significance of Sri Aurobindo's work which revealed first to his countrymen the Light of Liberty, and then to humanity a New Light of heaven whose descent on earth—foreseen by him as 'decreed and inevitable in the evolution of earth-consciousness', says he—'will free the godlike elements in man and shape all into an expression of Divine Nature.' Thus begins a New Age of the Spirit. And its beginning, its divine dawn is the Master himself and his Heaven-sent Collaborator, the Mother.

The authors of the book under review have done a great service to their countrymen by pointing them to the first rays of the Glory that began breaking out on India's horizon while it was dark everywhere. A study of the later events that have happened and are in course of happening and, as much as possible, of the subsequent life of the Master—for his inner life is infinitely vaster than his outer—will show how his earlier outlook and standpoint have been and are proving true, how the Dawn that gleamed on the horizon is steadily intensifying and promises a progressive fulfilment of the Master's pre-vision that our noons of the Future will be brighter than our Dawns of the

Past. A bit of deeper study will also show how Sri Aurobindo's life has been, in the true Vedic sense, 'a continuous succession of ever-new Dawns' and an epitome of our whole great Past and how its work is proceeding firmly towards 'the Everlasting Day' of Supramental Truth-consciousness.

We offer our grateful thanks to the authors and the publisher for what they are doing to reconstruct and popularise a very important and hitherto-unknown phase of modern India's history.

In view of the richness of material and of the fine printing and get-up of the book, the price may not be too high for earnest lovers of the country's history. But if to popularise such ennobling thought is also the object of the authors and the publisher, then perhaps a cheaper edition would be called for to suit the general pocket.

SISIRKUMAR MITRA

(2)

Eighteen Principal Upanishads Edited by *Acharya V. P. Limaye* and *Prof. R. D. Vadekar*. P x + 748, Pub. Vaidik Samshodhan Mandal, Poona. Price Rs. 20/-

Though the Upanishads have received the largest attention among Indian scriptures—barring perhaps the Bhagavat Gita —from modern scholars, a work of the kind and scope of the *Eighteen Principal Upanishads* has not been attempted so far, at any rate with the thoroughness that is stamped on every page of this splendid volume. Indeed there have been treatises before each embodying the results of distinct lines of study, but a production like this incorporating in a single work so many distinctive features e.g. the text, alternative readings, critical notes (exegetical and grammatical), parallels in the inter-upanishadic and Vedic literature, index of works and clauses,—is the first of its kind and the world of scholars will ever remain grateful to

the Editors for the scrupulous, painstaking industry and scholarship they have brought to bear in its preparation.

The texts included in this collection are eighteen, to be precise seventeen. They are : Isha, Kena, Katha, Prashna, Mundaka, Mandukya, Taittiriya, Aitareya, Chhandogya, Brihadaranyaka, Svetasvatara, Kaushitaki, Maitrayani.

The editors have also selected the Bashkala Mantra Upanishad, Chhagaleya Upanishad, Arsheyopanishad and the Shaunaka Upanishad in view of their thought-content which is similar to the recognised older texts ; and they have included the Jaiminiya Uapnishad Brahmana (of which the Kena is a part) as it has all the traits of an Upanishad and merits an intensive study at the hands of scholars.

In the preparation of the text, the editors have consulted many authoritative editions, old original manuscripts and in certain places suggested variant readings "giving our reasons therefor, but always bearing in mind the famous dictum : the correct need not be the original". Of course one has to pause a hundred times before changing a single syllable come down the millenniums of tradition of *Sruti*—the Word whose origin is beyond the realm of logical intelligence and carries with it its own significance and content which needs to be fully fathomed before reason could legitimately question. It has been suggested, for instance, to read *ānandam* for *anantam* in the passage *satyam jñānam anantam brahma* (Tattiriya Up. II. 1.). We would rather leave the text as it is. For *anantam*, Infinity, is the more fundamental truth: *ānanda* is there because of *anantam. Yo vai bhumā tat sukham*, in infinity lies Bliss (Chhandogya VII. 23). The Rishi's description of Brahman as *anantam* is deliberate and contains a whole philosophy in a phrase—a feature characteristic of the Upanishads.

The editors rightly claim that the parallels they have given from Vedic literature is a unique merit of this work. For there is a number of writings e.g. of Dr. Ranade or Dr. Haas, where parallels in thought or word from the Upanishads are cited.

But here the attempt is pushed further and covers not only the Upanishads, but the entire Vedic literature, even the Vedangas like Nirukta of Yaska, Ashtadhyayi of Panini, the Mahabharata etc. Now and then there are references to parallel lines in Jain, Buddhist and Greek thought. This is not to say that the whole field has been exhaustively covered; the editors themselves discountenance any such claim. We do come across some notable omissions here and there; for instance, the famous Rik (V.62.1) of Shrutavit Atri, *ṛtena ṛtam apihitam*, could very well be cited as a striking parallel to the verses 15 and 16 of the Isha Upanishad, *hiraṇmayena pātreṇa* etc. since both express the same truth of spiritual and psychological experience though the latter registers a marked development in the increasingly overt expression of Idea-Symbols.

A third of the volume, over two hundred pages, contains an Index of words and clauses in the Upanishads dealt with and is of capital importance to every student of Indian Philosophy.

We are promised, in the volume to follow, a complete and free English translation of all the Eighteen Upanishads, with explanatory notes and what is more important, an 'etymological dictionary of Upanishadic sanskrit'. The editors propose to give word derivations of all important words in these Upanishads, bearing in mind past efforts in this direction and taking into account recent advances in the science of Etymology. We await the publication with eager anticipation.

One word more. On the title page of this volume is reproduced an illustration of a Proto-Bulgarian picture in relief (7-8th Century). It shows two birds facing each other sitting on a bough, one of them with its beak touching a leaf-like object and the other watching. Appropirately cited underneath is the famous verse *dvā suparṇā* (from the Rig Veda and the Upanishads), delicately drawing attention to the far-spread influence of Indian thought across the continents.

M. P. PANDIT

OUR CONTRIBUTION *towards the building of your* HOUSE & INDUSTRY

TEXTILES

SUG

JAUHAR
FIRE BRICKS

COAL

JAUHAR INDUSTRIAL LIME

STEEL

CEMENT

ROHTAS CEMENT

BRICKS

CARBORUNDUM UNIVERSAL

PERMACEM WATERPROOF CEMENT PAINT

LET US JOIN YOU IN BUILDING THE INDIA OF TOMORROW IN THE 2ND FIVE YEAR PLAN

ABRASSIVES

BRITISH PAINTS

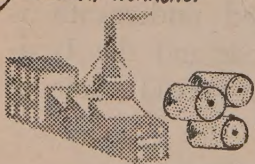
JAUHAR LIME

RAILWAY WORKSHOP

WHITE CEMENT

SANITARY WARE

TANNERY


PAPER MILLS

ORDNANCE FACTORY

S.N. SUNDERSON & C

1/1, DESHBANDHU GUPTA ROAD, NEW DELHI

Branches: MEERUT • KANPUR • LUCKNOW • BANARAS • SATNA • MAIHAR • KATNI • JUKEHI • PATNA
MUGMA • BHAGALPUR • JHARIA • CALCUTTA • BOMBAY and JAIPUR

KONVOY